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SUBJECT: CHAD: FISSURES IN OPPOSITION RANKS

REF: A. NDJAMENA 499

[1](#)B. NDJAMENA 516

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[1](#)1. (SBU) SUMMARY: Two tracks of government-opposition talks have been under way for the past week, one with the Chadian rebels in Tripoli, the other a continuation of the internal dialogue in Ndjamena. Preliminary indications suggest that serious fissures are developing within the formerly cohesive internal opposition coalition -- possibly bad news for the democratic leap forward that many hope for. END SUMMARY.

[1](#)2. (SBU) Negotiations opened a week ago in Tripoli between Chadian rebels and the Chadian government. We know from press reports that rebel leaders Mahamat Nouri, Timane Erdimi, and Hassan Saleh al-Djenedi arrived some days before the official Chadian delegation led by Minister of State Adoum Younousmi. Younousmi only stayed for two days before returning to Ndjamena and then going to Khartoum to prepare the way for Deby's trip to Khartoum, which was canceled at the last moment due to the death of senior Sudanese official Majzub al-Khalifa. It first appeared that the talks in Tripoli with the rebels had broken off, due to rebel demands for Deby's resignation and for including the internal opposition in the talks. But now we know that the talks have continued, with the government delegation led by Minister of Interior Ahmat Mahamat Bachir. (Key Deby security advisor Abderaman Moussa, who has led past discussions with rebels in Tripoli, is part of the delegation.)

[1](#)3. (SBU) Three of our sources in the moderate opposition coalition CPDC (Coordination of the Political Parties of the Democratic Opposition) give us somewhat conflicting reports, but the bottom line is that events in Tripoli have put huge pressure on the internal dialogue, with a resultant split among the principal leaders in the CPDC.

[1](#)4. (SBU) Former President Lol Mahamat Choua, perhaps the most substantial figure in the opposition, tells us that the six most substantial figures in the CPDC have split down the middle: Lol, along with Ibni Oumar Mahamat Saleh and Salibu Garba, on one side, and Jean Bawoyeu Alingue, Wadal Abdelkader Kamougue, and Saleh Kebzabo on the other. Lol's "faction" is holding tight to the position that it will not sign an agreement with the ruling party (the dialogue thus far has officially taken place only among parties) unless

Deby concedes on several fundamental issues, among them: naming of a true government of consensus with an independent prime minister, inclusion of the rebels in the dialogue, establishment of an international watchdog committee, and signing of the document only by the principal parties (not the raft of minor parties created by or allied to the government).

15. (SBU) Salibu Garba has given us a similar account, adding that internal CPDC discussions have broken down amid recriminations (accusations that the Alingue "faction" has been "bought off" by Deby). On the issue of including rebels in the dialogue, Garba says that, while it is essential to include the rebels, Tripoli was not the correct venue and it would be better to conclude the present CPDC-ruling party dialogue before roping in the rebels. In a conversation with the Ambassador June 27, civil-society leader Delphine Kemneloum also strongly underlined the view that, given Qadhafi's long history of meddling in Chad, Libya was an unacceptable venue and Qadhafi an unacceptable mediator.

16. (SBU) Ahmat Mahamat Hassan, a legal advisor to Alingue, told us June 29 that Alingue was in close contact with Mahamat Nouri in Tripoli. Ahmat said that the rebels had dropped their show-stopping preconditions and that discussions were on-going in Tripoli. Alingue would have been willing to go to Tripoli, but Deby refused the idea. Alingue had discussed by telephone with Nouri the idea of accepting a "gouvernement d'ouverture" rather than a government of consensus or national unity, the former implying that Deby would retain greater authority than the latter. Alingue tapped Ahmat to draft a decree stipulating the powers of a prime minister, heretofore only vaguely set forth in the constitution -- the idea being that the new prime minister and his cabinet would be more independent than the present. Ahmat said that Alingue's focus was on having a competent, professional, technocratic government of experts

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that will clean up the massive corruption and inefficiency, make effective use of the oil money, and clean up and professionalize the army. Ahmat implied that Alingue would prefer not to have a true government of national unity, as it would, by definition, by a politically-oriented cabinet balancing political parties rather than focusing on expertise needed to clean up the administration. (In a conversation with the Ambassador June 19, Alingue focused on two issues: the calamitous maladministration of the country and the difficulty of making progress in an environment of rebellion and insecurity.)

17. (SBU) Ahmat said that it appeared that both the CPDC and the rebels would break up. Among the rebels, Djennedi would "surely" sign and Nouri probably would, but Deby was not likely to be reconciled to the Erdimis. Among the CPDC, Lol was holding back, insisting on a government of consensus and not trusting anything else. Ahmat believed that the other CPDC leaders would follow Alingue, to include Ibni Oumar as well as Kamougue and Kebzabo. He believed that Lol might give in at the end. He said that none of them now trusted Salibu Garba, as they believed he had sent messages directly to Deby on the positions of the CPDC leaders. He said that Deby wanted Alingue to be the new prime minister, but Alingue "wanted to be a candidate" (i.e., to run for president in 2011), which, it was generally thought, would disqualify him as prime minister. Lol, Kamougue, and Kebzabu all also "wanted to be a candidate." Salibu wanted to be prime minister but was deemed unacceptable by the others in the CPDC. A possible compromise candidate for prime minister would be Yusuf Saleh Abbas, who serves as a diplomatic advisor to Deby at present and is respected by all sides. Ahmat anticipated that there would be a resolution of the two tracks, internal and at Tripoli, in relatively short order -- "maybe a week."

18. (SBU) Comment: It is too early to tell how crippling

this fissure in the opposition ranks is, or how much Deby has "won" and the cause of a democratic opening has lost, but any fissure in the CPDC is troubling news.

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